The
COMMONWEAL

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Retribution in Kharkov

THE PROVISION in the Moscow pact that war criminals be returned to the scenes of their crimes for trial under local laws produced certain misgivings at the time. It has been hard to see how, in lands where "inferior" peoples have been tortured and murdered in great numbers by the "master race," justice could be expected for any except the fully guilty. Can justice be expected where authorities are motivated by hatred, fury and revenge? Since the crimes with which these prisoners will be charged are violations against the laws of every land, would not justice be better served by bringing the accused before special international tribunals? Would not such a procedure lay a surer foundation for European peace and order? It would seem so. But a number of those who had reservations on this point put off in their minds the day of retribution until the war was over; possibly when peace came, a better way could be found of dealing with those charged with atrocities.

The Kharkov trial and execution provide a rude awakening. Prosecution of war criminals is already in process. It is not so much that Americans instinctively shy away from executions. It is the manner in which the affair was staged, the way it fed the vengefulness of the populace. And the enormity of the crimes confessed by four relatively obscure individuals was positively sickening. Only the stark details filtered through the censors. Even so it was strongly reminiscent of the Moscow purge trials of a few years back. It was a bi-lingual affair staged from start to finish before a packed house in the Ukraine Theater. Foreign correspondents were admitted only for the last few sessions, but Russian workers attended in large numbers throughout. Each of the four glibly confessed to everything (as at Moscow) and when the sentence was pronounced, the house burst into cheers.

The execution itself was even more theatrical, with 50,000 people looking on and noisily demonstrating in the Kharkov square. Russian planes flew overhead while photographers shot the grim scene from every angle. The avowed purpose of all this is to strike terror into the hearts of guilty nazis and the German people generally, which, with the cry of "unconditional surrender," would seem to spur them all on to fight to the last ditch. It is difficult for Americans to understand such things. But whether or not the practice of public executions is alien to us, we may well question the psychological value of such evidences of popular fury and vindictiveness as propaganda film material to induce surrender.

What can be said in defense of such procedure and of the Czech war justice, Polish justice, Jugoslav justice and other national variations scheduled on this new and startling pattern? At most, that such public trials and executions satisfy a grievously wronged people's rude sense of justice, their demand for retribution, etc.; that otherwise the enraged victors would throw themselves upon every available living German and mass slaughter would ensue. The theory is that the identity of those responsible for the appalling atrocities (some must be admitted as facts) is known, that the great bulk of the enemy soldiery is innocent of such inhumanity, that a rough sort of justice will be achieved and the lesson will be so plain that it will act as a deterrent to future terrorists. And we must face the fact that this is the way the Russians and other outraged peoples intend to proceed; representatives of the United States have approved it in principle. For the time being trials of war criminals appear scheduled to follow the Kharkov pattern.

Two questions still remain. Do a trial and execution such as that staged in Kharkov satisfy or inflame the passion for revenge? Should not American influence in this matter be directed toward collaborating with other nations in establishing international tribunals which will guarantee strict justice here? The stability and peace we seek as a primary objective of this war must have justice as a base. Vengeance leads but to vengeance.

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Employment Is Not Automatic

WE HAVE BEEN hearing a great many contradictory things about what is likely to happen here in the United States when the war is over. Everybody expects a slump as compared to the present boom, but where people disagree is on the extent of that slump. Some authorities tell us that there will be 12,000,000 unemployed. The *United States News* has conducted a survey and made an analysis of its own. It sets the unemployment figure at 8,000,000. And even these prophecies are based upon a certain amount of planned effort to cushion the shock given our industry when it must return from wartime to peacetime production.

It seems likely that the ease of this transition will depend a good deal on how long the war lasts. Were hostilities to cease—were the Germans to surrender and the Japs to continue fighting—within the next few months, the effect upon our economy would be devastating. For although there has been much talk about plans for readjustment, such plans are largely conspicuous by their absence except in the minds of their advocates. General Motors recently made its gesture, but this seems exceptionally specific, despite the much publicized claims of what private industry will be able to do. As far as the soldiers and sailors are concerned, sums have been provided for mustering-out pay—sums not much more than sufficient to enable these men to purchase new sets of civilian clothes and keep going a few months. Other than this, nothing has been done.

The reason is not far to seek. Washington at present is so preoccupied with politics that about the only spare-time activity in which it seems able to indulge is that of managing the war effort. Politics on the party level are not the only politics being played. As always happens in large organizations, the various departments and bureaus are full of persons worrying about their own jobs. And as is also human, inter-departmental politics take up a lot of time. Once it is settled who is going to be our President for the next term, a lot of this forced-draft jockeying for position will cease, and the arms of government whose task it is to initiate planning legislation can really get to work. Hence it is probably a safe—if very tragic—statement that the continuance of the war beyond the 1944 election gives promise of a better solution of internal problems than would a prompter cessation of hostilities. After all, it is not cynical to say this since the precise date of victory does not lie within our control as a nation.

In any case, it is certainly a civic duty for Americans to think earnestly and without partisanship of this problem confronting us, and to make their thoughts known to those in government who can implement them. There has been talk of a vast public works program. Might there not also be talk of providing a genuine framework for resettlement of our over-swollen metropolitan populations—a genuine promotion of decentralization and a breaking up of the mammoth units created by war migration? Such a scheme, in itself, would provide vast needs for labor which might do a great deal to cushion the shock we shall inevitably get.

A State Prepares

GOVERNOR THYE of Minnesota has recently appointed an Inter-Racial Council under the chairmanship of Father Francis Gilligan of Saint Paul Seminary. The committtee includes several distinguished Negroes as well as Protestant and Jewish clergymen, among them an Episcopal bishop. Said Father Gilligan at the first meeting of the council: "Other states have waited until there were riots and disturbances and then set up a commission that was to repair the damages. Minnesota has established this inter-racial commission to ascertain conditions which might breed grave social conflicts in the months to come. The commission will be concerned not merely with the correction of such current conditions, but also with a positive program that will lead to more genuine and firmer cooperation among all groups."

An Issue of Free Speech

THE United States Supreme Court has recently refused to review the case of 28 members of the Socialist Workers Party (Trotskyite) indicted and tried in Minneapolis in 1941. Of these 28 men, 18 were convicted and sentenced to prison. The charge against them was based upon their advocacy in peace-time of an overthrow of our form of government and their "intent" to promote disaffection in the armed forces—advocacy limited to printed words without acts. The charge was brought under a 1940 statute making peace-time sedition of this sort punishable by imprisonment or fine. Those convicted had distributed literature of the usual left-wing kind, no more extreme than that which has been common in such circles for many years. Hitherto it has generally been American practice to consider that expressions of this sort came under the constitutional guarantee of freedom of speech, so long as they were not associated with overt acts, or so long as in times of emergency they did not constitute "a clear and present danger." Certainly the founding fathers —notably Jefferson—were not afraid of such advocacy. It is incomprehensible that on so important an issue the Supreme Court should have refused a review. For this there is probably an understandable reason. The unhappy circumstance in this case is that the appeal was taken after Pearl Harbor, when the mood of Americans was naturally inflamed against anyone disapproving

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of our form of government. The Supreme Court's refusal may seem unimportant in these days of war, but it sets a grave precedent which Americans should note. Preventing the disaffected from expression of their disaffection does little but promote what it seeks to suppress.

"In Poverty, Hunger and Dirt"

IN A world at war it may still be worth remembering that just a hundred years ago, during the Christmas week of 1843, *Punch* of London published "The Song of the Shirt," by Thomas Hood. There are those writers who have dated from the appearance of this poem the rise of a social conscience among the English-speaking nations.

Feast Day

IT'S ALL mixed up; Christmas and the war. It is as if we were waiting for Christmas and expectant about the war. It is as if we were waiting for the New Year and waiting for something that will make the war altogether different: that will make it finished. It is as if one could go through the year and there is one day after another, one week after another, pay day, Sunday, Monday and there is no reason to expect anything very marvelous; it is as if the war had been going on and on and the soldiers gave us North Africa, Sicily, Calabria and Naples, the advance in Russia, the planes week after week over Germany, and of course we will win the war some day. And now there is Christmas Eve and at midnight there is silence and then suddenly it is Christmas Day; there is New Year's Eve and then suddenly there is New Year's Day. There is a brand new Christmas Day, a clean New York. There is this war that has been going along and now suddenly there is this feeling as if there would be a New Year's Day, a Christmas Day in the war. A day entirely different from other days. It is as if there had been too many days like every day in the war and now there had to be a day like no other day in the war.

It's all mixed up; it does not make sense; there is no connection. Christmas has nothing to do with the war. We know perfectly well what it is we are waiting for in the war. We know what it is that makes all other news unimportant. We know that we are waiting for the troops in Britain to move, for the troops to move into Europe from the south. It has all been announced by Churchill, Stalin and Roosevelt. No one is going to tell us the date. The date will have nothing to do with Christmas Day or New Year's Day. It is just that it will be a day of decision, a day that will decide.

The year lasts interminably and then there is Christmas night and New Year's Eve and the year is ended. The war lasts interminably and then there will be a day when the war will be decided. There is no logic in thinking that just because Christmas is here and the New Year is here, that other day is close. It is just that every year there is this moment in which it is Christmas Day, this moment in which it is New Year's Day so that we think there can be a day unlike every other day in the year, and so we think of the moment in which there will be a day unlike any other day in the war. It is just because there is this knowledge that there are these two days in the year which are exceptional days that we have this hope that there will be a day in the war that will not be like any other day in the war.

In Europe it must be like that too. In Provence there is a ruined hill town called Les Baux. The empty town looks out over the plains. You come there to Midnight Mass and after you come out from Mass you look out over the plains and see the lights in the villages in the plains. There is this Midnight Mass in a ruined hill town with the silent countryside beneath the stars. It is a peculiarly pure place for the celebration of Christmas. There will be no tourists there this year, no Parisians, but the people from the villages in the plains will go there as they always have done and they will say this is Christmas morning and when will be the morning of peace?

That strange line which divides Italy, that line of fire in the night crossing Italy from sea to sea will be luminous still this Christmas night. But on both sides of it in the hills and in the valleys, in all the villages, in all the towns, the priest will be at the altar; at a certain moment he will say "Today . . ." And those who hear him will think and when will come that other day?

The King of England will say his prayers on Christmas Day. It is just that if a day is set aside from all other days one ceases to think exclusively in terms of years.

The ruins of Les Baux are those of the castle of the Comtes de Provence. They are the ruins of a political power long obsolete and of a culture Dante knew about and Saint Francis. Christmas Day will dawn over the ruins of Lübeck, over Hamburg, over Berlin. There will be a Christmas Day and a New Year's Day in Warsaw, in Kiev. There is not a place in which people can escape being reminded that it is not inevitable that all days should resemble each other.

Of course the holy day passes, and the day by which men attempt to divide indivisible time into something that does not appall them passes also and then there is only Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday again and nothing special. So that you can have an Armistice Day also and nothing necessarily is accomplished. It's all mixed up. Christmas Day, New Year's Day, Invasion Day, Armistice Day, the Day of Peace. It's all mixed up in our hearts.

C. G. PAULDING.

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A Place to Lay Your Head

At the present rate, we face a national calamity

Harry Lorin Binsse

WHY is there so profound an apathy about housing? Why this should be, is hard to say. After all everybody, at least in most climates, has to have a place to sleep and eat and live, and that place is usually very dear to us. Indeed love of home is one of the most universal emotions, so strong that it easily turns into sentimentality. We all of us have our dreams of some comfortable dwelling place, nearer to the heart's desire, nearer to the perfection our lives lack.

The dream may vary from a tawdry little colonial number stuck in a row with a thousand other Cape Cod specimens on what was once a stretch of honest prairie to the latest sleek modernism atop a New York skyscraper-apartment. But the dream is constant and beguiling and deep within us.

Why is housing so very dull a subject? Perhaps because each dream is so vivid and detailed and complete in each of us that we lose all interest except in our own little private dream, and are repelled at the thought of generalizing it. The dream is so vivid it drives out the abstraction. And the housers—professional and amateur—deserve a large share of the blame for public apathy over their favorite subject of discussion. More millions of utterly arid words and figures (and more figures!) have been fed to the printing presses on this subject than almost on any other. Abstraction is piled upon abstraction until the abstraction, itself repellent, becomes positively noisome.

Now we live in a world and in a country where millions of people have their dreams of home and have no home. They live in shacks, they live in trailers, they live in what the government charmingly designates as "demolishables" or "demountables." They live in slums, in buildings long since declared unsafe, in single rooms where the beds work three shifts. And no one could ever pretend that these places are home. What is more, every indication points to an aggravation—a steadily increasing aggravation. More and more people are going to be living in such shelter; less and less are going to be able to look forward even to a partial fulfillment of the dream they cherish.

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Washington is certainly a strange place. Nobody I have been able to find in the Federal Government really knows the facts about the vast migration within our country which this war has produced. Therefore anything one says about it is guessing, and the most reliable guess is that which is based on the largest amount of knowledge of little, isolated facts. There is one over-all fact. Our gigantic war production effort has drawn to our cities a vast influx of people. All kinds of people. People mostly from small, sleepy towns, people from farms, from ranches, from the backwoods. Sharecroppers, Arkies and Okies, Negro field hands from the South, Mexicans, "relocated" Japanese. Into the cities they have flowed, and the cities have swallowed them like gluttons; but like gluttons, the cities do not want to admit their gluttony. The result is that in almost every instance official bodies will do everything they can to minimize the influx. Up until recently the authorities in Cleveland, Ohio, were proclaiming that very few Negroes had come into that city. Then a scandal broke over the sale of rotten meat in Cleveland's Harlem. A newspaperman decided that here was material for a feature story and did a bit of investigating. He found that there were somewhere near 80,000 people living in dwellings which might possibly be adequate for 20,000. And now Cleveland is beginning officially to admit that perhaps a few Negroes have drifted in. Until very recently New Orleans, we were told by the War Manpower Commission, had only a few hundred "in-migrant" Negroes—"in-migrant" being another of those charming specimens of governmental jargon, this one signifying workers who have come into a city or area from elsewhere. As a consequence, no war housing could be put up for Negroes in New Orleans. Finally, Fisk University sent a delegation of sociologists to look into matters and published that delegation's findings. At a minimum, 47,000 Negroes had moved into New Orleans to find work. War Manpower Commission's face turned slightly red, and now an official figure for Negro in-migrants is at hand. And many of us will remember the statistical controversy a couple of years ago between the Mayor's Committee in Detroit and the realtors of that appalling specimen of massed humanity.

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There are perfectly simple reasons for this—reasons of self-interest. Self-interest on the part of real estate men, who always like a housing shortage, because it makes for better business—so long as it is not too acute. Self-interest on the part of Chambers of Commerce because they are fearful that if over-crowded conditions become known to the War Manpower Commission, their city will be classified in that Commission's Group I, which would mean a loss of priority in obtaining new war contracts. Self-interest on the part of city governments because it is a nuisance to have to worry about such things in the midst of a war boom and because it is hoped that over-crowding will act as a pressure to drive out unwanted labor when the war is over. So there you have a combination of self-interests all working together to keep even the Federal Government from knowing the facts.

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Of course the War Manpower Commission does know a lot of the facts. This is particularly true in the case of smaller cities where there has been a tremendous boom—so large that something had to be done. Thus in San Diego, where the population has jumped in three brief years from 256,000 to well over 400,000, there was no hiding the facts. And of course in cases where complete new towns had to be built, the facts are available. Vanport City, near Portland, Oregon, is the outstanding specimen. Within a year a completely new city sprang up here, with a population of nearly 50,000. And there are communities of this kind all over the country, particularly in the South.

From these elements we can begin to form some notion of what has happened to our American population since 1940. With the exception of New York, every large city in the country has had a great influx of people, varying in degree and amount, but probably in no instance less than ten percent of any given city's former population. A highly visible proportion of this migratory influx has been Negro. It is probably not too far from the truth to say that today three out of every four American Negroes are living in industrial towns and cities, North and South. It is probably true that almost an equal proportion of all Americans are now in cities. And it is certainly safe to say that all American cities today are over-crowded. Now when we remember that within two years of the end of the war, somewhere in the neighborhood of 523,000 publicly financed housing units of a temporary nature must be demolished or removed, if the mandates of Congress are carried out—as well as a very large number of privately financed temporary dwellings, which we may hope will be removed, because they are crass specimens of embryo slums—and when we remember that approximately half of the men to be demobilized from the armed forces will be going back to big cities, we can conceive what the need and demand for homes will be like. That need and demand are already terrifying; what will they be when the boys come home, and when the "demolishables" are demolished and the "demountables" are demounted?

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At the moment, of course, permanent building is possible only within very narrow limits. The War Production Board is able to make building materials available only where they are desperately needed for repairs and war housing, which must be held within rigid cost requirements. But already there is unemployment in the building trades, and as new industrial plants are completed, there will be considerably more unemployment. The average age of plasterers, carpenters, bricklayers, masons, plumbers, electricians and the rest is quite high.

Long years of depression and inactivity discouraged the training of apprentices, and in war time the draft has sucked up apprentice material. Probably the average age of building mechanics today is very close to fifty. Men of fifty obviously are useless in the armed forces, and they make very poor material in modern industrial plants. Hence they will be the first large group to become superfluous in the war effort, and they will be available to help supply the terrible need which already faces us. And the construction industry and the "developers" are panting and straining at the leash.

The War Production Board cannot say when it will be possible to release materials for home building. It would be possible right now to make available certain elements needed for such construction, but there is a terrible scarcity of lumber, and lumber is still an essential element for construction. If the war keeps on at the tempo envisaged by our leaders, it is conceivable that within six months some amount of general building might begin. The labor unions and certainly the business community want this first building to be in private hands, and probably it will be, for there are hundreds of thousands of families which actually possess the means to build or buy a new home. Obviously they can be taken care of by private enterprise, and doing this job will involve a minimum of planning and Government activity. It is the simplest job to do, and therefore it will be the first job done. What is more, we need not worry about it in the least, for here we are dealing with people of means who are probably fairly well housed already and who can quite adequately take care of themselves.

Doing this, however, will only very slightly affect the needs we are piling up among those of

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lower earning capacity. Let no one deceive himself. All the talk about the wonderful earnings of war workers has built up a mirage. We see only prosperity and we forget that there are still millions of Americans who, even in this boom, simply do not make enough money to buy or rent the kind of dwelling private industry can supply without Government subsidy. When the war is done, our over-crowded cities will remain over-crowded, become even more over-crowded, if all we do is to give private industry a green light to build homes for middle class people.

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There is what I believe to be an unrealistic notion prevalent in Washington on the subject of this over-crowding. You will find responsible officials talking glibly about "demobilization" as though that process would automatically apply to war workers just as it will apply to soldiers and sailors and marines. The idea seems to be that the minute war industry ceases to turn out weapons and all the things our fighting men need besides weapons, all the dear little in-migrants will go back home. I believe that any such expectation is almost criminally wishful thinking. And particularly is this the case with Negroes. What on earth has the ordinary Negro in-migrant to go home to? And yet there is more than a suspicion that many of our city fathers are deliberately closing their eyes to Negro over-crowding in the expectation that these people will clear out the moment jobs get scarce.

Of course many Government officials, particularly those who have a personal stake in public housing, are well aware of the situation and cherish no illusions about war workers going back to where they came from. But unfortunately the organized real estate men of the country have done a very good job of building up prejudice against public housing. They have accused it of being extravagant, of being socialistic, of being (most terrible of all!) New Deal. They are forced to admit that business unaided cannot afford to provide low cost dwellings. But they want to get their fingers into the pie.

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The basic pattern of public housing as it has been carried out under the various housing acts of recent Congresses is simple. It is not perfect, and it is subject to serious criticism from an architectural point of view. But the fact remains that for the first time in our history decent living quarters have been made available at rents to fit the pocket-books of the poor. The achievement is limited, but it is none the less an achievement. Economically it works this way: a city sets up a housing authority of its own, with personnel appointed by the mayor, which works out a project to submit to Washington. Washington subjects the project to careful scrutiny. After it has been approved, the Federal Government undertakes to guarantee the securities which the local housing authority sells to the public and the proceeds of which cover the cost of actual building. Private investors have always been eager to buy these securities, since they are not only guaranteed but carry a good interest rate. Each unit in the project has what is called an "economic rent" assigned to it. This is the monthly amount which it would be necessary to receive if all the expenses involved were to be obtained by revenue from tenants. This figure includes amortization, interest charges, management expenses, maintenance. The only difference between this economic rent and a commercial rent is that the latter would likewise include profits for owners and full municipal taxes. On the basis of a prospective tenant's actual income, the rent he is to pay is then determined. The difference between this rent actually paid and the economic rent fixed for the space he occupies, is supplied by a subsidy from the Federal Government. As the tenant's income changes, his rent likewise changes, and if his income eventually increases to the point where it is more than four times the amount of the economic rent of his home, he is obliged to leave the housing project—always supposing that some private housing is available to him. This process is familiarly referred to among housing officials as "graduating."

There are local variations in this pattern, but by and large the above description will give you the basic idea. The object, of course, is to provide shelter for the needy and at the same time to make certain that this shelter will not be gobbled up by those who are properly the clients of private enterprise—the thing that invariably has happened whenever low cost homes have been offered to the public without restrictions as to the incomes of occupants. If real estate men would only look upon what has been done with a certain breadth of vision, they would realize that public housing is a great asset to them. For it is in normal times a sort of reservoir from which flows a constant stream of reliable tenants and even prospective purchasers who have had all the advantage of the training in decent living which these projects afford. But no, they want to be in on even this sort of business. Therefore they are advocating a procedure which on the very face of it is inferior to that worked out by the Federal Government. They want direct subsidies for building dwellings which shall be under commercial management. If tenants are to be allowed to rent space at rates less than sufficient to pay costs, this is to be done by billing each tenant for the full amount of the requisite rent and having the tenant go to his local relief agency where he will receive a check for the difference between

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that rent and the rent he can afford to pay. The pauperizing effect of this procedure is obvious, it betrays that peculiar and most unchristian belief that people are poor because of some moral blemish, and therefore must suffer humiliation if they are to be helped by society. This is the only alternative to public housing which the real estate men have been able to dream up.

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Of course there are other alternatives. Public housing as we have so far known it has not been perfect. Very interesting schemes for what is called mutual ownership, based on what has been done in the Scandinavian countries, are being talked about. It is conceivable that large investors, like insurance companies, using new techniques, may possibly be able to supply lower cost housing than has hitherto been within the range of private enterprise. And procedural improvements might possibly be applied to a public housing program fundamentally similar to that of the past ten years. It would probably be a good thing if Washington had less control over the architectural destinies of future projects, for a heavy-handed bureaucracy tends to petrify an architect's thinking.

There are of course certain elements in the population which will ruthlessly oppose all schemes to supply better dwellings to the poor. Unfortunately—sadly—these bitter opponents of urban progress are themselves "little people." They are persons who have invested their meagre savings in cheap slum property and who derive their incomes from people who can only afford to live in shacks where the landlord need not worry about maintenance and where his only preoccupation is to collect a dollar or two every few days. There are hundreds of thousands of such slum investments throughout the nation. Happily the owners are not organized, and therefore their opposition is manifest chiefly on a local level. Yet they can do much to block action. In one Southern city the Negro owners of Negro slums have successfully prevented any housing authority from being set up by the city. They batten upon the degradation of their own race. And unfortunately these little people do have a good deal of personal influence with their Congressmen, so that in times like the present, with Congress hysterically inclined to eliminate Federal agencies and to cut out "socialistic experiments," they have a certain importance.

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So here we are. Our cities are degenerating rapidly. Over-crowding is one of the quickest moral poisons known to man. It carries in its aftermath crime, delinquency, uttermost misery. Over-crowding is bound to continue, because of the war, for some years. If it is allowed to continue too long, it will produce race riots and hatred and be a breeding ground for violence—it has already done all of these things sporadically. Now is the time to assess the need and make up our minds how we are going to meet it at the very earliest moment when we can meet it. I have just returned from Washington, where I poked into every corner to find out whether anyone really was doing something about it. I found plenty of talk and recrimination and discouragement. I found almost nothing positive. The only hopeful thing is that a lot of people are at least aware of the terrible things which face us.

The National Housing Agency, it is true, has what it calls a public housing "shelf," which consists of a group of public projects which would seem the most likely to go ahead the minute it is possible to do anything in this line. Of course if Congress decides not to continue public housing projects, piling up this shelf will have proved a waste of time. In the Senate Mr. Wagner of New York has introduced a bill for slum clearance which provides for loans with which to acquire city land and provides grants for planning. It is a little difficult to see exactly how the passage of this bill would materially change the pre-war public housing picture, although its grants for planning seem good to me. Senator Thomas has introduced a bill to create an "Urban Redevelopment Agency"—a sort of over-all federal city planning board with power to assist local projects which meet with its approval. Precisely what the effect of this legislation, if passed, would be, it is equally hard to say.

Someone must cut through the maze of conflicting ignorance about our wartime population shift. Official figures are in most instances manifestly distorted to serve special interests—governmental interests, the interests of war agencies at loggerheads with each other, the interests of municipal politicians and real estate operators. That can be done at once. And the second thing is more a matter of prayer than anything else. Let us pray that the present disorganized scramble of back-biting, cat-fighting officials and Congressmen and lobbyists come to an end, so that something positive may be done by government as well as by private industry, not only toward the solution of this problem but toward effecting some sort of rational change-over from our war economy to a peace economy. Mr. Charles E. Wilson, formerly President of the General Electric Corporation, has succinctly told us what is going on in Washington today: "Special political and economic groups want to win complete victory for themselves regardless of the consequences for others and for the nation." If they keep on doing so, the consequences can be appalling beyond reach of a wild imagination.

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Franco's Prisons

By a Catholic who has been in them

Klaus Dohrn

Just as we go to press an AP dispatch from Madrid announces that Generalissimo Franco's Cabinet has authorized "the conditional liberation of all political prisoners sentenced for political motives whose conduct has been good, and all imprisoned 'priests, soldiers and members of the Falange.'" This is indeed, welcome news. But it applies apparently only to political prisoners not charged with crimes and only to those tried and sentenced by Franco's courts. The vast majority of Spain's political prisoners have little hope even of being tried in the near future. After five years they are still in protective custody, administrative confinement, labor camps or under investigation. From this amnesty such are excluded.—THE EDITORS.

THE TREATMENT of prisoners has always figured prominently in Christian thought. In the formularies of the liturgy, this problem is linked immediately with the great evils of hunger, plague and war. The Christian believer has to stand the test of these inescapable woes. Prisoners there must be, but it is a grave sin to keep a fellow-man in jail unjustly or to mistreat him, and ever since the angel freed the Apostle from his shackles, the sympathy and prayer of the Church have gone out to the prisoner, even if his captivity was wholly justified.

In Spain the problem of prison and prisoner has always been preeminent and a heavy weight on people's minds. Catholicism and an individualistic attitude, nourished by personal dignity and thirst for freedom, have produced a special affection for prisoners regardless of the causes of their bondage. It is most significant that Don Quixote liberated the galley-slaves in rage and fury for the simple reason that he could not bear the sight of men deprived of liberty.

One of the highest festivals in Spain is that of the Virgen de la Merced, Our Lady of Ransom, patroness of prisoners. This commemorates the deliverance of Christian captives from the hands of the Saracens. And the members of the Order of Mercedarians devoted themselves to this task and even accepted voluntary slavery to liberate ailing prisoners or the fathers of large families.

In Spain's history the destiny of political prisoners has played an important rôle because every régime jailed its opponents who by this very fact became dear to the nation. Party strife has always been bitter and passionate in that country and therefore the number of political prisoners has been large. Today in chains—tomorrow in power: this is a very Spanish fate. It is also valid the other way round: today in power—tomorrow in chains.

The habit of imprisoning political adversaries is, in Spain, not a fascist invention. In this regard, the Republic was faithful to Spanish traditions. This undeniable fact explains many subsequent events and should perhaps act as a restraint on overflowing enthusiasm for the Loyalists, but it cannot be used as an excuse. Cruelties committed in the name of Christ and His Church cannot be justified on the ground that cruelties have been inflicted on the Church.

Today, five years after the end of the Civil War, Spain's prisons and concentration camps are still crammed. A considerable percentage of the population, in some regions up to ten percent of all adult males, are still deprived of their freedom. The victor has never granted a general amnesty, and periodical special amnesties which, strangely enough, have not distinguished political from criminal prisoners, have not been generous enough to empty the jails. The few who were released were quickly replaced thanks to new arrests, sentences and administrative measures.

The commentary that accompanied the recent March of Time documentary film on Spanish prisoners was clearly anti-Franco, but the pictures were largely pro-Franco, which is not surprising since the photographers could not have worked without government permission. The prisoners shown in that film were hardly typical, and most political captives in Spain would be happy if they were confined in these jails—clean, hygienic, well organized and enabling the inmates to do some reasonable work. In spite of the anti-Franco bias in the text, an unprejudiced spectator might think that Spanish prisoners are not very different from American ones.

But apart from the fact that an American convict knows why and approximately for how long he is to be in jail, these pictures were utterly misleading. The large majority of Spanish prisons are not houses built for the purpose, but old

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castles, towers and convents, reminding the visitor not of American prisons but of Fidelio stage-sets: rattling chains, cold, thick walls, cellars without natural and often even without artificial light, murderous humidity and dirt, sticky air, rats and vermin. The inmates of these caves are pale, broken, starved creatures. Their heads are shorn, they wear convicts' clothes and, if they are lucky, ragged cloaks which, in the Spanish army, serve as overcoats. Even the most primitive sanitary conveniences are completely lacking. Food is in many cases insufficient—though it is said that with the improvement of the general food situation in Spain this evil has been mitigated lately.

Again and again I have witnessed severe beating of political prisoners, Spaniards and foreigners. Treatment of the latter became better only after diplomatic interventions, but no one had concern for the natives. In addition to beating, there is a system of drastic and humiliating punishments. The victim has to stand half of the night or the whole night beside his bed. He has to run around the court with a stone on his head. If a prisoner cheats the authorities by obtaining a second portion of food, he is made to stand next to the flag with his arm raised.

Strangely enough, these political prisoners are not subjected to political education or indoctrination. It seems that the officers and soldiers who guard prisoners and camps are not interested in winning the captives over to the ideas of the "New State." Their chief aim appears to be revenge and punishment. You were defeated, hence you have to suffer. The primary attempt at influencing the prisoners' minds consists in a rather complex Salute to the Flag, twice a day, and in the obligation to attend Sunday Mass and other religious services.

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This leads to a subject which is most essential and painful from the Catholic point of view. The March of Time film showed impressively the presence of crosses, priests and nuns everywhere in Franco's prisons. What could be more shocking for a devout Catholic than the scene showing a group of prisoners practicing the sign of the cross? I admit that I had to suppress a feeling of nausea, and the reader will understand my sensitiveness when I recall the most horrible impression of my prison life. Holy Mass was celebrated in the overcrowded, modern prison of Saragossa. The halls of this jail radiate starlike from a center platform. There the altar was erected, surrounded by beribboned prison officers. Greeted by blaring trumpets, the priest approached the altar and the ceremony began. I confess that at that Mass I was a bad worshipper. I could not take my eyes from the thousands of faces which glared and stared from all these corridors, expressing the helpless fury and hatred of human beings who had only one thought: how to break these rails and walls, how to regain their freedom. Not one of all these men, I felt, saw in the holy ceremony anything but an additional humiliation imposed by the victor. How they thirsted for revenge, how they must have longed to do what they had done when they had had the upper hand: burning churches, tormenting priests, making fun of the sacraments. The prison wardens did not try to hide the coercive character of this religious ceremony. They and convicts who had been chosen as their assistants walked with heavy sticks through the ranks and without uttering a word beat those whose attitude was not recollected, who did not kneel down in time or took their eyes from the altar.

All this appeared to the prison authorities as just punishment. The "Reds" had persecuted the Church and it was only logical, once they had been defeated, to compel them to pay homage to the Church.

Catholics will realize in deep sorrow that the Church suffers twice, and it is difficult to decide in which of the two cases the damage is greater.

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In a concentration camp I once saw a sergeant cruelly beating up a prisoner who had dodged Mass. The same evening I heard the same sergeant deriding the Church and priests most contemptuously. In a moment of boldness, I asked him why he had punished a prisoner who, obviously, had shared his views. The answer was that the prisoner was a "Red" and that, for this reason, he had to attend Mass. I asked whether he, the sergeant, was not a Catholic too. Of course, he said, he was Spanish. I asked whether this was the only reason or whether he really believed in God and the Gospels? Of course not, he said, these were inventions of the church bonzes and outmoded superstition. In short, this man was "Catholic" because he was Spanish and anti-Red. He was not anti-Red because he was Catholic.

I am far from asserting that this attitude—reminiscent of the *Action Française*—is typical of Franco's officers, but it is certainly typical of many Falangists. I think the clergy of Spain is much better aware of this danger than many Catholics abroad. Never did I see prison guards or their officers going to Communion—apart from some militant Carlist Requetes. A Catholic is bound to raise the question: Why does the Spanish clergy allow itself to be used in a degrading rôle in Franco's prisons and concentration camps?

An answer, though certainly not an adequate one, may be found in the fact that despite the undignified coercion, which puts servants of God in the dangerous proximity of slave-drivers, the presence of priests and nuns is of some real ad-

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vantage to the prisoners. Repeatedly and almost regularly I saw prison priests influencing officers in the direction of greater leniency. In thousands of cases the priest was the only liaison between the captive and his relatives. I often asked myself whether these clergymen were not directly motivated by such considerations when they accepted the tasks allotted to them by the Falangist authorities. Many prisoners, among them communist members of the former International Brigades, told me that they had reason for deep gratitude toward some of those priests. And still more consolation must have been afforded by the nuns ministering in the womens' prisons.

In this one may find a little comfort. It is also worth mentioning that Catholic priests could be found among the prisoners themselves. First of all Basques, wonderful, upright men, and foreign clergymen captured when they crossed the borders from defeated France. Priests detained behind walls and barbed wire—they suffered for their faith and for the honor of the Church.

One of the worst aspects of Spanish prison life is the fact that many men are jailed who are innocent, even by the standards of the present régime. Many prisoners have to endure all these hardships for months and even years without ever facing a judge or even being accused of a political crime. Compared with them, those who are legally convicted are a privileged class because they know at least how long their suffering will last. All men who during the Civil War were of military age but lived in "Red territory" or abroad; all those who as republican soldiers returned from France, where for some time they had found a frightfully inhospitable refuge, have to wait in prisons and concentration camps until their police records are complete. Inquiries concerning their attitude and actions during the Civil War are made in every village and town on whose soil they set foot. By endless investigations the government tries to find out whether they were guilty of a single terroristic act. This gives a wide scope for personal vengeance and denunciations and it keeps the spirit of the Civil War alive. If something onerous can be discovered, the courts impose draconic punishments. If the investigation does not yield anything, the culprit is finally transferred to penal battalions in Spanish Morocco or on the Canary Islands, where he has to drudge as long as he would have served in Franco's army had he been on the "right" side.

All this has the result that even innocent people are kept away from family life and normal work for a considerable number of years instead of aiding in the reconstruction of an impoverished country. Like an enormous nightmare Franco's overcrowded prisons encumber the Spanish nation, preventing its psychological and economic recovery, spreading physical and mental disease.

Marsden Hartley, Visionary Painter

JEROME MELLQUIST

NOBODY could forget the eyes of Marsden Hartley. Actually they were like blue beacons. They were possessed of a strange, rare, penetrative force. Even people meeting him on the street might halt, wondering, despite the man's bulk and his flashy, stagey clothing, if he were not indeed a poet or a painter. And indeed Hartly was both—this gifted artist who died last September 2, at sixty-six.

In his younger days Hartley was distinctly compelling. Tall and severe, he would stride into the classes at the National Academy and dig into the other students with an eagle-like stare. He seemed combative and resilient. He was much with the ladies in those days, painting still-lifes or doing dainty works with a Whistlerian background. If he turned to landscape, it was still in terms of his adoration for such American predecessors as Wyant, with his misty marsh-scenes, Homer Martin with his blowing cloudlands, or perhaps the flinty Homer, with his spray-shot coastal views.

Even when, somewhat later, he frugally patronized Kiel's, a German bakery on the West Side, he would eat his meals alone. Other artists would puff their pipes or have their stories. But Hartley sat aloof from such enjoyments. He communed with other spheres. In spring he would buy himself a flower, tuck it in his buttonhole, and stroll the pavements like a prince. Sometimes, relenting, he would confide to Alfred Kreymborg, the author of "Troubadour," that his chief admirations among poets were William Blake and Francis Thompson. He understood their minds, and he could soar into that red-shot sky of Thompson's for surely he belonged there. Years later Hartley was to write of Thompson as one of those "geniuses [who] must creep hand and knee through mire, heart pierced with the bramble of experience, up over jagged pathways to that still place where skies are clear at last."* Very soon he would learn more of such torments and then beseech all the assistance that he could get from Thompson's unearthly resolutions.

This occurred when he moved back to Maine. Maine, his native state, he had left at fifteen, briefly to live in Cleveland, then to try New York and its art schools. Sometimes he had revisited his stony homeland. But when he returned in 1905 he came not as a welcome vacationist, but

* From "Adventures in the Arts," published in 1921. Hartley had another book of critical appreciations in manuscript at the time of his death; also a volume on the circus, and numerous poems.

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to take his stand as a painter—his heart literally in his eyes, and all of his aspirations put to the ultimate test. Yet the villagers did not understand. How could they—those bitten woodchoppers, those trembly old ladies, those overplaced younger folk? Hartley was some kind of outcast. So he sought shelter in a deserted farmhouse. There he lived on four dollars a week, painting, ever probing the sky and trusting to the hope that some day he, too, would see clear at last. Once he wrote to Emile Zoler, a fellow-student from the Academy, asking if he had reproductions of Segantini, that painter who portrayed the Alps and fleecy herds and devotional scenes in a peculiar stitch technique giving entry to air and light. Zoler sent back some reproduction and Hartley, impelled by this example, achieved at last his individuality.

First he did some canvases that might have been Segantinis. Birch trees in clotted colors danced like frenzied spirits of the wood. Even more agitated were the colors in a second canvas, on the back of which he jotted down a free-verse poem, a diatribe against the oldsters cackling about a village stove in the wintertime. Then, having whipped and cut them, he attempted quieter mountain passages. Forgetting Segantini, he poured molten reds and yellows and slate blues on a canvas—the color-spottings of fall. He portrayed rivers glinting in the distance. He eyed with a special quiet the deserted farmhouse where he dwelt. In winter he caught the snows driving against a mountain, chilly lavendars and purples massed deep upon its slopes. He somehow ascended to the ethereal as he inspected these scenes and put down the crisp reality of his Maine countryside. But sometimes, almost fainting from his struggle, he painted trees like gibbets, hanging broken-armed before the shanty where he sought his living. Again and again he did such suicidal pictures.

Then he returned to New York. He found a friend, Shaemas O'Sheel, Irish-American poet who was later to revise and enlarge a Catholic anthology first assembled by Joyce Kilmer.† The generous O'Sheel remembered that explosive exhibitions had taken place at "291," a tiny experimental center on Fifth Avenue, where Alfred Stieglitz presided, and he thought that perhaps Hartley might find sympathy there. Introducing his troubled young friend, O'Sheel found Stieglitz not only sympathetic, but willing to act. A show was immediately promised.

The show was vilified. Painters, critics, wisemen from the museums, even *habitués* of "291" condemned it. But the pictures stayed, and even gained Hartley a little security. At any rate, his suicidal impulse was stilled. He had found his first clear patch of sky.

† This compilation—first issued in 1917 and republished in 1926—was entitled *Dreams and Images.*

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But Hartley not only was the sky-seeker, he would be the dandy as well. So, as he had his exhibitions, he expanded. In 1912 he visited Paris. There he strode the boulevards with his stick, frequented the salons of the Steins and other connoisseurs, and became a knowing one of his generation. Not that he was forgetting Maine. He insisted that Ryder, the American painter of haunted seascapes, had been the first to plant him truly in his own countryside (though actually the Ryder influence had not become evident until 1908). He still would refer occasionally to his background. More often, however, he quivered at the newest production of Picasso or some other modern, and sought to be in the latest swim. Accordingly, many abstractions were among the works he brought back for a 1913 show. His still-lifes, too, had multiplied. All these works had amiable qualities—subtlety, fine color, a glowing pigment, even flashes of the early Hartley when he seemed to be suspended in the sky. But he increasingly showed himself the cosmopolite. He traveled to Germany, remaining until 1916 and painting canvases that somebody said belonged in an arsenal, so full were they of military symbols. Yet from his juxtaposition to Dresden experimenters like Kandinsky, the "musician" of the abstract, Paul Klee and Marc, he set forth veritable pinwheels of color. In fact, Berlin reporters, at the time of his show there, dubbed him the "nerviest" American.

Driven back to this country by the war, he attempted sea-scenes in Provincetown, where he witnessed meetings of that group already beginning to produce the first of O'Neill's one-act plays. He exhibited but obtained scant support, and left for the Southwest. There, amid the deserts and mountains, he winged high again—perfecting expansive works that sometimes had a ripple of his earlier sunniness. And he experimented much, as he always had. Not only with the glass paintings (which he had already discarded) but with pastels and other media. Here, too, he produced voluminously as a writer: poems, fantasies, criticism, appreciations of the Indian dances. Then, clinging as ever to the edge, he again sought out New York, the old suicidal mood once more upon him. Halting Stieglitz one night in a Chinese restaurant, he held up a penny, saying, "This is all between me and starvation." Alarmed, his old friend Stieglitz with the kind assistance of Mitchell Kennerley, director of the Anderson Galleries, arranged an auction of Hartley's entire *oeuvre.*

What a night! Cars packing the boulevards, bidders ever more enthusiastic, Americans almost

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butting one another to procure a countryman's work. Tears in his eyes afterwards, Hartley, the recipient of nearly $6,000 declared, "Oh, if my mother only could have seen this!"

Back again to Europe, to complete, he said, what Cezanne had started. Settling in the Provence, he daily confronted the Mont Ste.-Victoire and those faraway aqueducts in the valley. Many paintings he sent back—perhaps not quite as impressive as he thought. A book of his writings was collected—a very good book entitled "Adventures in the Arts." It is a neglected record of his appreciations.

Still later, after repeated Atlantic crossings (one made possible by Guggenheim grant) he found himself in the early Thirties spent, both economically and spiritually. At last he was forced back to Maine. And the old glow returned. Facing bleak rocks and stump-strewn pastures and chilly signs of neglect, he painted, not only these things, but roses and sea-flowers and bouquets before visionary harbors. Hartley was whole again.

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After 1937 his acclaim increased. Thrifty galleries exhibited him, smarter ones took him up. Prizes came to him, first at the Pennsylvania Academy in 1940 and then the Metropolitan's "Artists-for-Victory" show. He had mellowed. The last months of his life found him a somewhat deaf, contented, slow, even a gentler man—but the eyes still bright.

Marsden Hartley will have a place in American painting. It will not be, despite some opinions to that effect, as the successor to Ryder. Those first plain-songs of Hartley soared up into his own country. They are direct meditations upon the hillsides. They live in the open air, not in the subdued twilight peerings of the earlier mystic. Wherever Hartley imitated Ryder he was pretentious, expanding his canvases beyond their proper size, or utilizing a speech not entirely his own. He will have a place as composer of capable still-lifes, though not, one must admit, as a depictor of rocky types from the New England daily life. But he certainly will be remembered as a spirit who, withstanding all vexations, sometimes attained the upper air.

Communications

A MANIFEST DUTY

Brooklyn, N. Y.

TO the Editors: While you mention no names, I presume your editorial "A Manifest Duty" (December 10) is intended for me. Cardinal Hayes has never publicly or privately rebuked me for anything. If I am to be rebuked, my superior, the Bishop of Brooklyn, would administer the rebuke. This he has never done, publicly or privately.

No doubt, you have been misinformed by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People or one of the vicious Negro papers.

I hope you will make the proper correction. I have no doubt the Cardinal, as well as the Bishop of Brooklyn, received complaints and demands for my removal.

Let me add that I have made no comment, public or private, concerning Negroes in many months. I testified before the August Grand Jury on a subpoena. I gave them facts which no one can deny. A Negro named Ashford has declared that I, on November 21, at a meeting, delivered "a tirade" against Negroes. This is false. I spoke for adequate police protection which I have been demanding publicly and privately for several years. I did not mention *Negro* in my speech, which was moderate, conciliatory and critical only of the City authorities.

I believe you, on moral as well as legal grounds, will try to repair the harm you have done. Your article will simply add fuel to the fire which is burning here.

Right Reverend JOHN L. BELFORD.

We are delighted to receive and publish this letter from Monsignor Belford. Evidently we had been misinformed. We relied upon sources which we have found accurate in the past, and hope hereby to repair any damage which may have been done or any false impression given by our editorial.—THE EDITORS.

PRIMER FOR AMERICA

Louisville, Ky.

TO the Editors: I have read in THE COMMONWEAL (October 11) a review of Robert Tristram Coffin's "Primer for America" that rather astonished me, for I had not thought that any critic would mistake that volume for an attempt at serious poetry. I gathered from the preface that the author's intention was to use verse, the ballad form, simply as a string upon which to hang his tales of the American way of life, as he calls it, just as the "New England Primer" carried in its rhythms the teachings of a child's duties to God and man, according to the puritan creed. Mr. Coffin's obvious (as well as expressed) intention was to "reach the ears of the groundlings." He says, "I wanted these verses to appeal to everyone who reads. I wrote them *en masse* at three sittings, more or less."

They are just rhymes, of course; but they are very amusing and will be read by our boys and girls in the grades (and by older people) where a more serious and dignified verse would simply be passed by. And our children are not too conversant with the tales he has to tell. I should like to see the book on the shelves of our school libraries and in the homes—and mayhap someone else will be inspired to write in true ballad form of the deeper things that make up our American way of life. In the meantime, we can use what Mr. Coffin has provided for us. In the hands of a good teacher or an intelligent father or mother, this book may be used to get the attention of the younger members and as a point of departure for discussing deeper questions. R. C. W.

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TWO GERMANIES

London, England.

TO the Editors: In my article entitled "Two Germanies" (September 17) I advanced the view that there were indeed two Germanies, the Germany of Bismarck and the Prussian tradition on the one hand, and, on the other, the Germany of the mass. I expressed the opinion that the latter, because of its irrational and demonic characteristics, was really the more dangerous of the two. I also sought to indicate that Hitler was essentially the representative of this Germany of the mass. In developing this argument I expressed the belief that Lord Vansittart's analysis was rather different from my own, which in some measure I think is true. However, my actual words were:

> Lord Vansittart says in effect, "There are not two Germanies. There is only one. Frederick, Bismarck, Hitler and his Nazis were all essentially the same kind of people. They were all typical Germans. Germans are pretty well always the same."

Lord Vansittart has written to me complaining that these words do not do him justice. He writes:

> I recognise differences and nuances between Germans as clearly as anybody else, but I have always said that the Germans, when ordered to attack their neighbors by Frederick the Great, Bismarck, the Kaiser or Hitler, have always done so, and done so with the utmost brutality. Therefore, *so far as their conduct towards their neighbors is concerned,* it is fair to say that there is little to choose between Germans, except that they have steadily got worse as they go on.

I certainly never meant to suggest that Lord Vansittart could not recognize "differences and nuances between Germans," but, on re-reading my article, I agree that my words imperfectly expressed what I had in mind and might lead people to assume that Lord Vansittart's views were different from what they are. I tender my sincere apologies to Lord Vansittart for inadvertently misrepresenting him (which is certainly the last thing I would wish to do) and to yourself for imposing on your valuable space.

J. L. BENVENISTI.

"OUR CHURCH MUSIC"

Pittsburgh, Pa.

TO the Editors: Someone has called my attention to an article, "Our Church Music," which appeared in THE COMMONWEAL, November 26, 1943. The picture of present time church music, as given in that article, is so gloomy and desperate that some of my fellow choirmasters may even think, I am afraid, of giving up their jobs and opening hot-dog stands. I would like, therefore, to reach them in time through the courtesy of your columns and plead with them: Please, don't worry, don't worry!—rather say a prayer to the effect that respectable magazines may decide, some day, to inquire a little about the competency of new writers on specific matters, before publishing ridiculous statements concerning great men of the past and of the present.

I happen to know the young writer of the article well enough to assure our readers that his "oracula" should not be taken too seriously; for it is his favorite hobby to write about anything, about small matters which he knows and, more often, about higher subjects which he evidently doesn't know. Here are a few examples which I quote from his article:

(1) "We have to say either that there are no serious Catholic composers [of church music], or that they have all been scared off by the Motu Proprio" (Pope Pius X's Motu Proprio on Church Music). "But what of Debussy, say, and Fauré? Why haven't they written some practical Masses for us? . . . What of De Falla? . . . What of Ottorino Respighi, the Roman? Where shall we find those French apostles of the organ: Widor and Vierne, Tournemire, Mulet, Dallier, Dupré and Bonnet? Have they always had their backs to the altar?"

No, my dear young man; the reason why these great musicians didn't write Masses for us is not because they had their backs to the altar, but simply because they always kept their heads on their shoulders. In other words, they knew what any student of music knows, namely, that music is an art of many branches, branches so far apart from each other that only a few men, even among the geniuses, can safely climb from one to the other. In fact, we all know what kind of "church music" came from the pen of Mozart, Rossini, Verdi, Gounod and other illustrious operatic composers. Furthermore, in the art of church music itself there are two different fields quite apart from each other: one vocal and one instrumental. Now, to ask an organ virtuoso why he doesn't write a liturgical Mass is equivalent to asking a surgeon why he doesn't write prescriptions for headaches, or to asking an engineer why he doesn't lay out plans for a church. Shall we ask Maestro Toscanini why he doesn't write an opera or, what might seem more pertinent, why he doesn't write a symphony? It is true that some among the organ virtuosi have attempted to compose Masses; the result, however, has been neither artistic nor liturgical, according to those who can judge.

(2) "Are there no more Catholic artists?" continues the article. "Have they been frightened by the Motu Proprio?" We can assure them that it was never the intention of the Holy Father to embalm our music in the "mediocre style of Witt and Haller or of Perosi and Ravanello!"

Well, we all know of some four-footed creatures who, too, seem to take pride in smearing illustrious monuments. . . . Nobody, of course, would stop and argue about it, for bad habits and bad manners are rather difficult to correct. As Dante puts it: "Non ti curar di lor, ma guarda e passa!" Likewise, let's not argue about the young writer's pontifical pronouncement concerning Perosi's musical "spark" ("a very small spark," is his verdict); for it is just another of those commercial puzzles where the "quantity" appraised is in direct proportion with the "quality" of the appraiser!

As for his final crying question: "What Mass shall we sing this Christmas? Which would you choose?" may I submit the following answer and pass it along to our Catholic organists, although, I am sure, they need not my suggestion:

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Besides any Gregorian Mass in the "Kyriale" (there are six, at least, most beautiful ones, if the singers are familiar with plainchant), you may choose any from among the 62 Masses by Haller, Gruber and Singenberger. Teach your choir to sing the chosen Mass well, that is with the expression suggested by the meaning of the words, and your work will be liturgically all right. If, however, your choir can undertake a higher but more difficult style of music, you may choose any Mass by Mitterer, Stehle and Perosi—65 altogether. If, again, your choir is able to render a style of music much closer to polyphony, then you may choose any Mass by Ravanello and Goller—there are 43 of them, although not all in the American market. Finally, if you are looking for something to give your choir five minutes of recreation during rehearsals, I would, confidentially, recommend as follows. After having reminded your singers of the fact that Perosi's and Ravanello's style of church music is only a "mediocre" one (i.e., the product of "a very small spark"), let them examine a copy of "Missa Dominicalis" by a certain Richard Ginder (McLaughlin & Reilly Co., Boston, Mass.); then ask each choir member to guess how many ounces of "presumption" would be required to make Ginder's unique masterpiece balance the scales with any Mass by Perosi or Ravanello. The game, I am sure, will be enjoyed by all; for it will provide the key to understanding why Richard Ginder has chosen to be one of those young apostles who are going to straighten out many things *ab imis* in the matter of Church Music and other matters too, including the fundamental rules of Harmony! With little more than the seven notes of the musical scale in their heads, these young men, to be sure, are going to take the world by storm (read, *bluff*), without the old inconvenience of first shining their trousers on the benches of a "stinking Academy." Good luck! . . . and may the Lord deliver us.

CARLO ROSSINI,
Choirmaster at St. Paul's Cathedral, Pittsburgh, Pa.

ITALIAN CHURCH MUSIC

Jacksonville, Fla.

TO the Editors: One may or may not like a single composer's music, or even that of many composers; but sane criticism does not consign to the flames all the music of a whole epoch or a whole country, as Richard Ginder does with the church music of the new "Italian School" in his recent article in THE COMMONWEAL.

A statement of fact: the "Italian School" was not founded by Maestro Lorenzo Perosi, inasmuch as the reform movement in the sacred music of Italy began during the last years of Pius IX, continued under Leo XIII and attained its magna charta with the Motu Proprio of Pius X in 1903 a few months after his nomination to the Papacy. This writer was at that time Secretary of the Commission of Church Music for the Diocese of Caltagirone (Sicily) to which position he had been named in 1895, eight years before the Motu Proprio. Two local composers who had sustained the thesis of the reform for more than twenty years were members of this commission.

Maestro Capocci, whom Ginder puts in the same rank as Ravanello, Bottazzo and Terrabuggio, was on the other side of the fence; he continued the flowery melodious tradition of the Roman school, with the Meluzzis, the Moriconis and many others, the last of whom was the much lamented Cametti. Capocci had great talent: his "Laudate pueri" which used to be given in Rome for the Vespers of Saint Agnes always drew a very wide and most faithful public of enthusiasts. Beautiful music, but not at all "reformed" according to the sense of the Motu Proprio. In spite of that, there was in him and his colleagues a great progress from the theatrical music of the period of Pius IX.

The men of the reform were Tebaldini (whom Ginder ignores in spite of the fact that he was one of the purest and most genial Italian composers and for many years master at Loreto), Terrabuggio, Bottazzo and many others of the Leonine period; they gave a notable impulse toward a sane conception of church music. Bossi surpassed many of his contemporaries; Perosi came close behind him and became much more famous for his oratorios than for his Masses. Casimiri (who died this year) is to be placed above all the others, even Refici.

To say that Perosi has a "very small spark," and a solemnity "verging occasionally toward the saccharine" is, in my opinion, a confession of either a lack of comprehension of Perosi or an inadequate acquaintance with him. Perosi's Requiem Mass is to be placed among the best compositions of the kind, and it may even be classed as the best, worthy to be included in the same rank as the "Great Masses."

What has made difficult church musical production after Pius X is first, the lack of feminine voices and the prohibition of solos; second, the lack of choirs, especially boy choirs, in the parochial churches. Except in the basilicas and in the great cathedrals, one has to be content with Masses for two or even one voice, like Ravanello's. But is Ravanello really to be despised? For the purpose of following the liturgy a music without exceptional personality is better than music by celebrated musicians.

The whole problem of church music lies in this dilemma; either educate the public to feel music and every other art as intimately bound to the religious concept and life, in which case we would have the Masses of the style of the time, as in the past the Masses of Bach, Beethoven, Mozart, Rossini, Gounod, Verdi; or, according to the reform of Pius X, accompany the liturgy without disturbing it, in which case we accepted the subordinated-to-the-ritual style of Tebaldini and others like him, Casimiri included.

Apropos of Verdi, let us not forget that his "Stabat Mater" is truly church music, and that were it not for the female voices, it could even today be sung to organ accompaniment for the Mass of Our Lady of Sorrows.

It is surprising that Richard Ginder should believe that modern Italian musicians want to imitate Palestrina. Nothing of the sort. Their technique is perfectly modern. However, since they have only a male choir and the organ as instruments, and because they cannot indulge in the melodic line and in solos, they must use the harmonized

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structure of three or four parts, with the lights and shadows that a choir gives, in the imitations, canons and fugues. This writer has used them in the compositions of his youth, now bearing the date of almost half a century ago. LUIGI STURZO.

Father Ginder's article has provoked much comment; we at first felt that there would be little interest in letters on the subject, but those reproduced above seem to us to deserve special notice.—THE EDITORS.

The Stage & Screen

From Pillar to Post

THROUGHOUT this one, various characters keep mentioning the phrase "From Post to Post" whereupon others seriously answer "Oh no, from Pillar to Post!" and everyone laughs like crazy. Needless to say the gaiety is all on the far side of the footlights, but I wish someone would explain it to me. Even with a fever of a hundred and two, I couldn't understand it at all. In any case, a new play by Rose Simon Kohn dealing with the housing situation at an army camp, the piece gives us a soldier pretending to be married to a girl in order to get her a room and then having to face up to his commanding officer for the remaining two interminable acts. Something about the cosmetic business crept in for a while, although I couldn't tell why, and I will give you exactly three guesses about the physical condition of the Army wife with the longest part. I think that should box it. Neither good enough nor bad enough, the whole thing amounts to nothing at all. *(Produced by Brock Pemberton at the Playhouse.)* KAPPO PHELAN.

The Man or the Star?

SCREEN biographies have been few during the past year. Perhaps the studios are having casting difficulties and are timid about rushing into real lives unless they can duplicate the high standards set by Paul Muni's Pasteur, Raymond Massey's Lincoln, Van Heflin's Andrew Johnson or Robert Donat's Mr. Pitt. Or then again they may realize the great responsibility they assume when they confuse, in a series of light-weight confections, such stars and renowned personages as Don Ameche and Alexander Graham Bell, Bing Crosby and Dan Emmett, or Victor Mature and Paul Dresser. Two forthcoming portraits-in-film that we are looking forward to with great anticipation are Bernadette and George Gershwin, both of whom are to be played by comparatively unknown actors in movies that are being made with careful study and, needless to say, much expense.

Last month we saw Pat O'Brien impersonating Frank Cavanaugh, whose work as a football coach was greatly respected by the fans. Pat, as a young man at Dartmouth, is a little difficult to believe, but when he gets to portraying Cavanaugh the coach at a series of colleges for whom he turned out good teams, he successfully projects the man and the leader, more successfully in fact than in his portrayal of such a national legendary figure as Knute Rockne. We don't learn a great deal about the man that we couldn't get in a written account. The camera has to do much skipping about as we follow Frank's career from his Dorchester boyhood, through World War I when he became known as *"The Iron Major"* (the film's title) and when he applied the same pep-talk methods that he used with his teams, until the climax in 1932 when his Fordham eleven beat Oregon State. As cinema, this biography of a good man, whose motto was "Fight for what you believe in," is more likely to impress football enthusiasts than general motion picture audiences.

"Jack London" gets itself so involved in a variety of problems that it fails to come off as a movie about a real person. We hear more talk about our hero than we see him in action. Michael O'Shea, a not-familiar movie figure, looks and acts enough like Jack to be convincing; but the script is designed to whitewash the flashier aspects of the author's life and the lines work hard to sell us on his being a genius without showing us that he is one. The film does succeed in making us believe that London was a writer whose writing had to burn through. The turn-of-the-century sets are good and a few of the earlier episodes that show Jack getting material for his stories look as if they might really inspire a journalist to protest against man's inhumanity to man. But the last third of the film becomes an anti-Japanese tract. London's coverage of the Russo-Japanese war may have been very good indeed, but his later "yellow peril" editorials sound pretty sensational. In straining to link its hero with the present situation, the film loses sight of him as a man. "Jack London" winds up as a propaganda piece—of little value as propaganda or entertainment.

The most recent biographical film, and the one that set for itself the highest aims, is *"Madame Curie."* That it is not entirely successful is due to the fact that it tried too hard and had to surmount barriers too difficult for cinema. After all chemistry and the properties of uranium and thorium are not dramatic subjects to the layman; and even though the script has simplified its explanations of the Curies' experiments so that a person who never even heard of Chemistry I could follow them, some of this material makes very dull cinema. Not all of it is an illustrated chemistry lecture, however. The Curies' goal is well stated and there are really thrilling moments—as when we see Marie and Pierre struggling through that hard winter with their bubbling cauldrons of pitchblende; or that magnificent later shot of their laboratory with table after table covered by the crucibles containing barium and radium, the last two elements to be separated; and that breathtaking scene in which the two scientists hurry back to their laboratory to discover that their years of hard work have not been in vain, and we see what they see as the camera focuses on the glass bell covering the glowing radium crystals.

Sidney Franklin's production of "Madame Curie" is frequently very beautiful. The French costumes and sets of some fifty years ago were duplicated with great care. And dignity is the word that best characterizes Mervyn

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Le Roy's thoughtful direction. If at times Pierre seems a little too shy and coy, we must remember that a movie has to make living people out of its characters and cannot show them as scientific symbols. Eve Curie, from whose book Paul Osborn and Paul H. Rameau wrote their screenplay, insisted that her father be emphasized as much as her more publicized mother. That Walter Pidgeon's performance stands out above Greer Garson's is due mainly to his fine acting and to the fact that Miss Garson's glamorous beauty is somewhat distracting in a rôle whose demands are more mental than physical. However, both actors and the meticulous craftsmen who worked on the film deserve credit for this fine tribute to two great scientists. I should have preferred that its 124-minute running time be shortened and that its finale had not attempted to put over the idea that science alone will cure all evils. But even as it stands, "Madame Curie" is a splendid laudation to the man and woman whose perseverance, courage and scientific insight have greatly benefited mankind.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

Books of the Week

French Canada in Transition. Everett C. Hughes. Chicago. $2.50.

THERE are far too many books about French Canada, and all too few of them are good. Getting away entirely from the well worn path of the "Picturesque Province" and "Quaint Quebec" school, Everett Hughes has written the most important recent book in English on the region which refuses to fit into the pattern of Anglo-Saxon North America. His book is a study of the impact of the industrial revolution upon a people who have long chosen to stand outside the Anglo-American world, behind the barriers of their faith, their language, and their customs. These barriers have not blocked the expansion of the new industrial and urban culture into what was once a patriarchal agricultural society of an archaic pattern, but no longer is, despite the propaganda of the tourist bureaus and the travel books. The change, extremely rapid and complicated by racial differences, has resulted in many problems, which Dr. Hughes analyzes with brilliance and sympathetic insight. And this analysis should be of considerable concern to both Americans and English Canadians, for it is their lack of understanding of the French Canadian which has largely created what is known as the French Canadian problem.

To those nourished on the legend of the *habitant,* it may be surprising to learn that the French Canadians are not a predominantly agricultural people, that in fact only 22.5 percent were thus employed in 1931, while even in 1871 the figure was only 47.1 percent. There has always been industry in Quebec, but it is only in the last thirty years that large-scale industrial development has occurred and brought with it rapid urbanization. The extremes of the current French Canadian society are found in the remote rural parish, still relatively untouched by the new order, and in Montreal, the metropolis which has engulfed half the population of the province. Dr. Hughes has devoted most of his attention to a small industrial community which he calls "Cantonville," which is typical of the smaller industrial cities in which the transition from the old order to the new is most marked and easiest to observe. In 1911 Cantonville was a country market town with a population of 2,605; by 1937 it was a large industrial center of 19,424. The problems of this suddenly swollen community are those with which all of French Canada is struggling today, and the minute examination which Dr. Hughes makes of Cantonville's social structure brings out brilliantly the salient features of the pattern of transition.

The book is divided into three parts, the first of which sketches the background of the old rural order. The second and main section is a detailed dissection of Cantonville, its people, and its ways; and the third a study of metropolitan Montreal which is at once the center of economic change and the point where French Canadian society comes into closest contact with the Anglo-American forces which are revolutionizing Quebec. The final chapter, "Quebec Seeks a Villain," applies the conclusions of the investigation to a luminous explanation of the social and economic protest movements which have alarmed the outside world in recent years. Frank and forthright to a degree in dealing with questions usually buried under sentimentalities and diplomatic half-truths, Dr. Hughes has done much to promote a better understanding of a complex society by its neighbors and by itself. It should be noted that though this is a sociological treatise, the author has shunned the professional cant which makes so much sociology unreadable and written his book in a vigorous and vital English. Only a slight overindulgence in statistical tables which might have been verbally expressed stands in the path of the average reader.

MASON WADE.

Man the Measure. Erich Kahler. Pantheon. $5.00.

IT IS not an easy task to do justice to Kahler's complex book which is overflowing with clever observation and keen points of view—and nevertheless as a whole is a bitter disappointment. The author is one of the most sensitive and best read scholars of Europe, who has worked in many fields of history, sociology and social science. He combines an analytic mind with artistic intuition; he cuts short the trifles and stresses the essential facts; he discusses problems in a very well-bred and tolerant way. In view of such talents and background it is not astonishing that he narrates the Odyssey of mankind from the primitive stages to our own days by giving many new and stimulating aspects to well known facts.

But the author is caught by a strange self-complacency in claiming to have found "a new approach to history." In reality all he does is to appraise the past from a contemporary angle and in the light of his personal philosophy. I fail to distinguish any fundamental difference between the Kahler approach and the one of, say, Saint Augustine in his "Civitas Dei," or of Herder in his philosophy of history or of Christopher Dawson in his recent books—except that all three, Saint Augustine, Herder and Dawson, are much less eclectic and much more original. Accordingly, their conceptions of the human panorama are much more grandiose. I cannot understand how Kahler can assert that "man as such has never been consciously considered as a special subject for historical survey." As a matter of fact, most students of history motivated by philosophical concepts have devoted a great deal of attention to the manifold changes of man's character, ideas and aims brought about by the trend of world events. The German historian Kurt Breysig—whose works are, strangely enough, not mentioned in Kah-

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ler's bibliography—advanced a claim similar to Kahler's about a decade ago in his "History of the Soul," which at least is abundant in remarks about man's changing psychology and psychic attitude.

There are three other German authors who had a decisive influence on the somewhat molluscan philosophy of Mr. Kahler—and a strange team they are indeed: Karl Marx, the socialist and "dialectic materialist"; Stefan George, the great aristocratic poet, and Ernst Juenger, the analyst of the "Total War" and the "Total State." Kahler attempts the impossible in trying to make the views of these three outstanding men coalesce; it is more of a hodge-podge than of a synthesis. Kahler adopts George's humanistic valuation, Juenger's description of the "post-Christian era," in which service to the collective has taken the place of religious service, and the Marxist idea of an inevitable evolution toward "invalidation of the individual."

What is he driving at with this three-fold ideology? In his last chapter Kahler develops the truism that human dignity is not only offended when man is subjugated by man, but also when he is subjugated by things. "Goods are no longer subordinate to the good of man, but man to the growth of goods. Production is idealized, it becomes mythical, it is the true deity of our times."

It is this reviewer's conviction that man is necessarily led to make golden calves and other fetishes out of things whenever he loses contact with his Creator. This is not the result of a materialistic process of evolution, but a reaction of the human soul that repeats itself always in times of fading religion.

Kahler, of course, sees clearly that ours is an age of secularization. But he thinks this is a necessary trend of evolution, never again to be followed by a new longing for Christian ideals. Christians to him are helplessly lost in the thicket of modern life; "the demands in their belief and the demands of the world today become daily more incompatible." Kahler joins the most trivial positivists in claiming that God is but the prefiguration and "idea" of man, and insists that rational knowledge and natural science have displaced religion as a social force.

Thus Kahler's 640 pages of reflections on the long road of human "evolution" (he avoids the word "progress," but he means it) end in the shallow pulp of masonic optimism plus dialectic materialism, this *summa summarum* of an ambitious "new approach to history." "The idea of man, the counsel of a new humanism, are certainly the very last things to move the present world to a fundamental change. But we may expect this idea to force itself upon men when the course of events brings them to see that without human community and fraternity they are all lost together, that man needs goodness as he needs his daily bread."

Of course, he needs. But to explain this fact you need a book called "God the Measure" instead of "Man the Measure."

MAX FISCHER.

The Dark Continent. Richard Sullivan. Doubleday. $2.00.

THIS SHORT NOVEL is characterized on its jacket as "an expert and ludicrous story." It is at least "ludicrous." The characters as type characters, mere caricatures, lacking any subtlety of drawing or presentation; there are no nuances of feeling or ideas; the plot management relies on exaggerated contrasts and stock situations.

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We meet Francis Rafferty, a young college professor, and therefore living a bloodless academic life of books, vapid, inhibited, cautious, secure—a stock character if ever there was one. Tomorrow he is to marry Edwina, a strong, domineering, cold, energetic woman. The marriage is not one of love but of a "sensible long-term arrangement." A couple of stock mothers-in-law are thrown in.

But Rafferty very academically (that is, absent-mindedly) stumbles into a street hole, and when he emerges he loses his memory for six hours, and has adventures! Everything happens to him: he goes to a beer joint, uses his fists, gets mixed up with the police—and, of course, he meets Dotty James, a simple, outspoken, warmly human type (and in the novel merely a type). Rafferty learns how wonderful is life in the world and when his fiancée, Edwina, returns to claim him, he breaks off his engagement and the last scene shows him and Dotty going around and around and around on a merry-go-round.

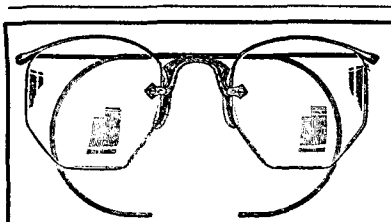
Occasionally the creaking puppetry of the novel is relieved by small, colorful, concrete details, but in general this ludicrous story lacks any subtlety of character or of situation. JOHN PICK.

Always Room at the Top. Ganna Walska. Smith. $3.50.

LUXURY may be a foolish thing, and yet nothing fixes a period in our mind as surely as the tale of its extravagances. Centuries from now, when imaginative historians try to bring back the Europe between the two world wars, try to describe the atmosphere in which Pablo Picasso evolved his indignant paintings, and Raymond Roussel his strange poetry, they will do well to remember the luxury hotels of the age, the fine motor cars, the private planes. Such things set the stage of an era.

Ganna Walska's autobiography, "Always Room at the Top," is something more than the story of a Polish soprano who married two American millionaires, for it offers detailed, documentary evidence of expensive living in New York, London and Paris. Platinum *faces à main* from Cartier, monogrammed Rolls Royces, million-franc sable coats, and seventeenth century wine glasses crop out in every other paragraph of Madame Walska's narrative. At her luncheons in Paris gardenias flown by plane from London distinguished her finger bowls. Later in 1939, when Madame Walska reached Lisbon on her way to New York, her jewel case was too enormous to be kept in the hotel safe. On her flight to America she carried almost 50 pounds of emeralds, diamonds, rubies and pearls.

"I am," says Madame Walska, "one of those women who helps herself to the worst piece of chicken at dinner in order to leave the best for her husband." Yet she lived all her life at a distance from the dingy. "My maid was instructed never to wish me good-morning as I could not speak for the first hour or two after awakening from sad dreams to sad reality." One of her husbands called her "Nature's child."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American Political Parties, Their Natural History. Wilfred E. Binkley. Knopf. $3.75.

THIS SURVEY of American political parties by Professor Binkley can be recommended to the general reader as well as to special students of political thought. While the author follows Mr. Beard and the current scholarship of the frontier-and-sectionalism school of historians and bases his work on a fairly wide bibliography, he thinks independently, is not bound by conventions, and writes courageously of men and events in a most interesting and challenging fashion. His familiarity with even the minutiae of history is most impressive especially as his wealth of detailed background has not defeated his power of generalization. He is detached, objective, and non-partisan, aside from a western point of view bred in the corn belt. He is guilty of neither hero-worship nor the debunking tactics of a reformer. He realizes that successful politicians before reaching stratospheric heights of statesmanship were realistic promoters whose consciences did not prevent them from using bosses and municipal machines to advantage, or from utilizing the antagonisms and discordant interests of sections, races, minorities, and classes to their own selfish advancement. With no thought of preaching, his selection of material and his critical observations set forth a desirable pattern of honest government which will promote the rights of all men and move in a progressive direction. There is a marked note of sectional, racial and religious toleration.

One might wish he knew the Irish as well as he does the German immigrant and that more stress was put on the churches in politics and the partisan appeals to later immigrant groups, who hold a balance of power in all industrialized areas in a country rapidly becoming urban. Some attention might well be given to the decline in numbers of the old Anglo-Saxon, Scotch-Irish ascendancy due to restricted families and the relatively large natural increase of the immigrant groups of the past century and especially of the last fifty years. As the land becomes more democratic in spirit and practice, numbers will carry greater political weight than financial and social forces in minority hands. Again the northern migration of Negroes might be stressed in the growth of the race's civil rights even in the eight southern states of poll-tax voting requirements, for the Negro vote in cities has deserted the party of liberation in its increasing class consciousness of recent years and in gratitude for material favors.

The author would ascertain the racial, class and sectional composition of our concurrent major parties and the diverse, ephemeral but highly serviceable minority factions which have all made positive, or at least negative, contributions to national progress. He would note the motivation of John Doe in casting his ballot—at least that one hardy soul out of five whom Charles Merriam has wandering from the faith of his fathers. Of late the number of political converts or perverts must be greater and more fluctuating. Over a long range, he sees a basic division of party composition in the eternal conflict of mercantile-financial interests with many controlling incidents. Leaders he finds often as followers in their own parades and formulizers of the inarticulate demands of their disciples. Any adroit leader on any level must understand the psychology of self-conscious minorities and inter-

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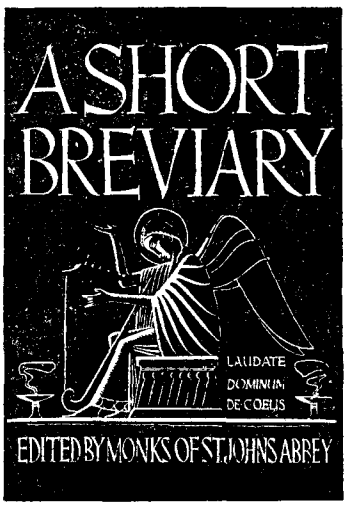
ested groups, for such combinations build winning parties. And what politician sheds his victory for a principle when he can so easily convince himself that it is but a policy?

With his objectives in view, Dr. Binkley compiles his facts to show the origins, composition and character of our political parties, never forgetting the forces of sectionalism and inflation evidenced as early as Bacon's Rebellion. Well does he take into account the effects of a widened suffrage, for all white men sixty years after Jefferson's Declaration of Independence, for some Negroes after the Civil War amendments, and finally for all women. Perpendicular cross sections of society gave way at times to horizontal parties, but not to a large degree until 1932-1940 when earners of a living wage, higher-rent payers, the socially secure, the reactionaries, royalists and the like voted against "that man" who lived a squire on the Hudson even as Jackson comfortably dwelt at the Hermitage.

Thus there pass in a superb summary, Federalists, Jeffersonian Republicans, Whigs, Democrats, to Grand Old Party, Populists, Agrarians, nativistic combinations in restraint of foreigners and Catholics, and reform factions. And the reader sees the Square Deal, the New Freedom, the New Deal, and One World, and he hears the cries of Tories and forgotten men, leftists and economic royalists in different generations. He sees the South, the Bible Belt, and the Irish in the cities going so solidly Democratic that it took Blaine, despite Burchard, to dislodge some of the Irish, and Al Smith to make Hoovercrats in the old Confederacy which Irish and German immigrants kept in the Union. While the Republican Party was faithful to big business, it nominated fewer corporation lawyers than the Democrats, even though it steered clear of voluble silverites and professors. Incidentally, except in 1928, Democracy selected its candidates for the presidency from the old Anglo-Saxon and Scotch-Irish stocks and the Episcopalian-Presbyterian denominations. Nor did it go far afield in its higher patronage offerings. Never did it have a candidate flexible enough to describe allegedly pre-election observations as campaign oratory. While it has fought its share of wars and faced most of the depressions and had the support of the most publicized local machines, it was never inflicted with Grantism or Harding's normalcy. Assuredly platforms must be flexible and leaders agile to appeal to such discordant groups as parties so often cover.

Only complacency hostile to any challenge will be upset by some of Professor Binkley's dicta: the Germans did not elect Lincoln. Indeed the late Joseph Schaefer has made it reasonably certain that five-sixths of Wisconsin's Germans voted for Douglas. Chandler is described as the most forcible of the Civil War senators. Lincoln supported labor's right to strike. Free land was more potent than anti-slavery. Lincoln was forced toward emancipation. He was shifty enough as he climbed the ladder. Vallandigham is portrayed as the "utterly fearless friend of the small farmer and mechanic." The Draft Act so "abominably framed" and "maladministered" explains the unjustifiable draft riots. Tilden is seen as a rigger of the stock market. Horatio Seymour could write to him that, "Our people want men in office who will not steal but who will not interfere with those who do." Military rule as a guarantee of chaos was welcomed in parts of the South. The wicked Reconstruction Era gave the South its state school system, such as it proved to be. Against a third term for Grant, Democrats cried Caesarism. Cleveland hired a substitute in the Civil War. Of course,

FOR RELIGIOUS AND THE LAITY



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Lincoln's son was studying in Harvard. Bryan's policies won while the Commoner was defeated. President Hayes had sympathy for labor and Henry George. McKinley wrestled with his conscience and took the Philippines. Hanna is seen almost as a laborite as compared to his associates including Roosevelt and as no idol of capitalists as compared, let us say, to Cleveland. Roosevelt is suspected of learning economics at Harvard from Professor Laughlin, "who had taken the inhuman economics of John Stuart Mill and made it still more inhuman." Dealings with George Baer in the anthracite strike turned Roosevelt to Mitchell. President Taft is sharply handled though admittedly he did more trust-busting than his predecessors. Coolidge of the middle class acceptance of capitalism is set forth according to the usual yardstick. Humphrey of the Federal Trade Commission is shown no favor. Wetness he finds the dominant issue in 1928. President Roosevelt is left as an opportunist. Politics is, inferentially, "who gets what, when, and how."

RICHARD J. PURCELL.

History of Macy's of New York (1858-1919). *Ralph M. Hower. Harvard.* $3.75.

DR. RALPH M. HOWER, the historian of Macy's, is an earnest man. If he did not tabulate the number of trips each elevator in Macy's makes each business day, it is simply because his teaching at Harvard set certain limits to his research. He has had access to the private files of the store, and no one who has checked either his footnotes or his bibliography can fail to be impressed by his scholarship.

Unfortunately, Dr. Hower has no sense of proportion. He devotes a third of the book to Rowland Macy, the store's founder, apparently without realizing that Macy was only an indifferent business man. He failed many times before making his lucky start in New York, and as he emerges from Dr. Hower's chronicle, his only gift was the knack of writing snappy advertising copy. He was frequently surprised by depressions, and he left an estate of no more than $300,000.

When it comes time to speak of the various Strauses, who made Macy's what it is today, Dr. Hower sketches their careers with a painful shyness, as though he were afraid of bringing any Straus to life. To tell the dreary truth, Dr. Hower has no talent for describing human beings. Instead he places a Teutonic emphasis on such fascinating topics as old-fashioned methods of accounting.

Dr. Hower can never be accused of the sin of attempting to amuse or entertain the public. It never occurred to him to tell the story of Macy's in terms of the New York of the times, nor did it ever dawn on him that he should say something about Macy's competitors.

The foreword tells us that R. H. Macy & Co. financed the book.

NBC Handbook of Pronunciation. James F. Bender, Compiler. T. Y. Crowell. $2.75.

TWELVE THOUSAND phonetically transcribed samples of words pronounced in the general American fashion—as opposed to the New England or Southern version—prepared as a guide for radio announcers and anyone else who aims at correctness of this kind. An aid to standardization. That a commercial publisher should launch such a volume must indicate either that there are more radio aspirants than one would suspect or that radio is to become an arbiter in such matters.

The Inner Forum

"Latin America Pattern"

THE CATHOLIC STUDENT'S MISSION CRUSADE of Shattuc Avenue, Cincinnati 26, Ohio, is planning a series of books on "the problems of the living Church." The first of these, a paper bound, attractively illustrated book of a hundred pages, is entitled "Latin America Pattern." Single copies cost eighty-eight cents. The authors are: Rev. James A. Magner of the Catholic University of America, with Rev. James T. Hurley, assistant national secretary of the Mission Crusade, and Louise F. Spaeth, assistant general editor of their publications, as collaborators.

This booklet is highly factual. It describes in brief compass the land, population, topography, transportation and other physical aspects of the Latin Americas. It takes up native ancestors and culture, the conquistadores and early missionaries and the general set-up of society when those lands were Spanish and Portuguese colonies. One of the difficulties for religion in the period of transition following the national revolutions of the nineteenth century was that the Catholic hierarchy was entirely Spanish or Portuguese. "For a time after the consummation of independence in Mexico, not one bishop remained in that country, with what damage to the Church can easily be seen. In Chile, Argentina and elsewhere the same experience repeated itself. In addition, there appears to have been a reluctance to accept Indians for the priesthood in the colonial period. This prejudice has now largely broken down. . . ."

Considerable space is devoted also to the revolutions themselves and the development of the Hispano-American nations. The influence of the French Revolution, rationalism and liberalism is given due weight, as well as differences that are manifest from country to country. Here is a summary of how that period affected the Church: "Unfortunately the era of independence did not usher in an integrally Catholic society in Latin America or a people fully prepared to discern at once the difference between the wheat and the chaff of the new philosophies and of the proposed reforms, or between what was authentically Catholic, what was non-essential increment, and what was only the pretence."

In emphasizing the importance for all concerned of Catholic missionaries from the United States the book mentions the fact that the Maryknoll Fathers alone have promised to send 100 of their men to Latin America this year. The number of North American communities of Sisters it lists serving there is also impressive.

CONTRIBUTORS

Klaus DOHRN was the editor of a Catholic paper in Austria similar in scope to THE COMMONWEAL. He escaped to France, from whence he fled to Spain in 1940. Here he was interned until finally he secured his release and came to this country.

Jerome MELLQUIST is an art critic, author of "The Emergence of an American Art."

Mason WADE's latest book is "Francis Parkman."

Max FISCHER is a European journalist now living in New York.

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